

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-12

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TAGS: PEP, UR, US
SUBJECT: SOME COMMENTS ON PONOMAREV'S SPEECH ON CAPITOL HILL

1. FULLY CERTAIN THAT WASHINGTON HAS THE COMPLETE TEXT
OF PONOMAREV'S SPEECH ON CAPITOL HILL JAN 23, WE WISH TO
MAKE ONLY A FEW COMMENTS ON THE MOST SIGNIFICANT ASPECTS
OF THE SPEECH.

2. FIRST, THE COVERAGE OF HIS REMARKS IN THE SOVIET MEDIA
WAS A BIT UNUSUAL IN OUR VIEW. PRAVDA'S CARRYING WHAT WE
ASSUME IS VIRTUALLY THE FULL TEXT (WITHOUT CALLING IT THE
TEXT) IS IN LINE WITH SOVIET MEDIA TREATMENT OF THE MOST RECENT
PONOMAREV SPEECHES OUTSIDE THE USSR. THE TWO WHICH
IMMEDIATELY COME TO MIND ARE HIS SPEECH IN PARIS TO THE
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FRENCH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMISSION
AND HIS ADDRESS TO THE PRAGUE "PROBLEMS OF PEACE AND
SOCIALISM" MEETING. EVENING TV COVERAGE JAN 23,
HOWEVER, INCLUDED LENGTHLY FILM CLIPS OF PONOMAREV
ADDRESSING THE ASSEMBLED CONGRESSMEN AND SENATORS
WHICH COULD ONLY HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE, WE BELIEVE,
IF SATELLITE TRANSMISSION HAD BEEN ARRANGED -- AN

UNUSUAL DISTINCTION AND ONE WHICH EMPHASIZES THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ADDRESS AS A STATEMENT OF CURRENT SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY AS WELL AS PONOMAREV'S ROLE IN THAT POLICY.

3. ON SUBSTANCE:

--MIDDLE EAST AND HORN: PONOMAREV'S COMMENTS ON THESE TWO TOPICS WILL BE TREATED IN SEPARATE TELEGRAMS. HIS STATEMENT THAT THE "AMERICAN ADMINISTRATION HAS UNILATERALLY RENOUNCED" THE JOINT DECLARATION IS THE STRONGEST LANGUAGE ON THE MATTER YET FROM A HIGH SOVIET OFFICIAL. THIS STRUCK US AS HIS MOST SIGNIFICANT DEPARTURE FROM THE STANDARD SOVIET LINES ON THE ISSUES HE RAISED.

--SALT REMARKS ARE A REPEAT OF THE BREZHNEV COMMENTS FROM THE DEC 24 PRAVDA INTERVIEW ABOUT THE "FAIRLY GOOD" (NYEPLOKHIYE) POSSIBILITIES" FOR AN AGREEMENT, BUT WITH THE ADDED CAUTION (MISSING IN BREZHNEV) THAT TRANSLATING THE POSSIBILITIES INTO REALITY WILL "DEMAND CERTAIN EFFORTS, ALL THE MORE SO BECAUSE IN THE USA THERE EXIST 'GUARDEDLY CRITICAL' SENTIMENTS AND SOMETIMES OPEN OBJECTIONS." (TASS ENGLISH CARRIES THIS SENTENCE, BUT SOMEWHAT TONED DOWN.)

--ON STRIVING FOR NUCLEAR SUPERIORITY PONOMAREV ASSERTS THE USSR "DOES NOT NEED" SUPERIORITY OVER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE US BUT WILL NOT ALLOW THE US TO GAIN SUPERIORITY OVER THE USSR.

--PONOMAREV'S CALL TO THE CONGRESS TO GIVE SPECIAL CONSIDERATION TO THE BREZHNEV PROPOSALS FOR HALTING THE PRODUCTION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND REDUCTION OF STOCKPILES IS OF INTEREST PRIMARILY BECAUSE IT MAY BE THAT THE SOVIETS WILL RETURN TO THIS POINT LATER, LOOKING FOR AN INDICATION THAT THE US CONGRESS HAS TAKEN UP PONOMAREV'S SUGGESTION. WE NOTE THAT PONOMAREV COMPLAINED THAT ON THIS PROPOSAL "THE NATO COUNTRIES ARE MAINTAINING COMPLETE SILENCE." SIMILARLY, A GROUP OF VISITING FRENCH SENATORS WERE RECENTLY REMINDED BY SUPREME SOVIET LEADER V. RUBIN THAT THE LETTER OF THE SUPREME SOVIET TO OTHER PARLIAMENTS ON THE NEUTRON BOMB HAS REMAINED UNANSWERED.

--WE NOTE THAT IN THE SOVIET REPLAY OF HIS REMARKS, PONOMAREV DID NOT SEEM CONTENTIOUS OR STRIDENT ON THE MAIN ISSUES HE DISCUSSED, BUT HE DID NOT FAIL TO TAKE UP CUDGELS ON THE TRADE ISSUE, CALLING TO TASK "THOSE WHO HAVE TRIED TO TIE THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE WITH US (THE

USSR) TO THE RIGHT TO INTERFERE IN OUR INTERNAL
AFFAIRS" HAVE GAINED NOTHING AND LOST "LUCRATIVE"
ORDERS TO OTHERS. (INTERESTINGLY, THIS PARAGRAPH
WAS DROPPED FROM THE PRAVDA VERSION, POSSIBLY FOR
REASONS OF SPACE.)

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